(c) whether such a standardized process has been evolved at Government level?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) This issue has not been brought to the notice of Government.

(b) and (c) Government is implementing a scheme for Computerization of District and Subordinate Courts in all States of the country and for upgradation of the Information and Communication Technology infrastructure of the Supreme Court and High Courts. This Scheme is being implemented as a Mission Mode Project named E-Courts Project. The first phase of the three phases of the scheme is currently under implementation. Digitization of court records is proposed to be taken up in the subsequent phases of the E-Courts Projects.

Uniform Civil Code

†1928. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) Government's approach towards principal of Uniform Civil Code in the country;

(b) whether separate civil codes are hindrance in social harmony and national integration; and

(c) whether Government would take any steps to do away with the customs and conventions countering the constitutional principles like equal right to women?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) and (b) Bringing in a Uniform Civil Code involves changes in the Personal Laws including those of the minority communities. It has been the consistent policy of the Central Government not to interfere in the Personal Laws of the minority communities unless the necessary initiatives for such changes come from a sizeable cross-section of such communities themselves.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Government is committed to bring gender equality for women in all spheres of life.

CBI probe on illegal mining in Orissa

†1929. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is aware of the fact that a strong demand is being made for CBI probe into illegal mining, pilferage of mineral wealth and irregularities in the transportation of minerals in Orissa;

(b) whether it is a fact that a demand is also being raised for getting the matter investigated by the National Investigating Agency; and

(c) if so, the facts in this regard and the steps taken and proposed to be taken further by his Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Some instances of illegal mining of iron ore and manganese ore in Keonjhar district of Orissa have

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

come to the notice of the Government. The Indian Bureau of Mines inquiries has found evidence of illegal mining of 1957 tonnes of iron ore and 56453 tonnes of manganese ore of a value of approximately Rs.23.39 crores in preliminary inspection of one mining area in respect of Ms. Ram Bahadur Thakur Limited (RBTL).

The State Government of Orissa has informed that :-

- A Vigilance investigation is underway
- Administrative enquiry is underway
- The State Government has arrested 8 persons (of which 6 are Government officials and 1 retired officer of the State Government) on 12.8.2009, who were subsequently released on bail.
- State Level Task Force has been reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary.
- All the District Collectors have been directed to hold District Level Task Force meetings regularly, verify the lease hold areas and take appropriate action.
- The State Level Enforcement Squad constituted earlier has now been strengthened and enforcement activities intensified.
- The Department has introduced newly designed Transit Passes printed in Government Printing Press.

The State Government has also reported on 16.11.2009 that it has taken the following additional action in this matter:

- 128 mining leases for various minerals including iron ore, manganese, chromite, limestone, dolomite and quartzite, where application for renewal of lease had been pending have been verified and mining operations suspended.
- 482 licences granted by the State for trading and storage of minerals have been suspended/cancelled.
- State Level Enforcement squad is conducting intensive inspection of non grant areas to check for illegal mining.
- The Mines Department in the State has begun verification of the mining lease boundaries, for which remote sensing technology is also proposed to be used.
- Four Committees have been constituted at State level for setting up integrated check gates, Revenue Intelligence, Study rationalization of weigh-bridges, and Study to deploy IT application in mineral administration.
- Filling up vacant post in the Mines Department of the State Government to enhance enforcement.

The State Government has further reported on 24.11.2009 in this matter that:-

- Vigilance enquiries have been converted into investigation by registering an FIR under various sections of law.

- As on date, investigation is under progress in 7 cases and as estimated by vigilance, total estimated loss of revenue to the State exchequer is Rs.526.13 crore.
- The investigation is continuing and due action will be taken based on final findings. The State Level Enforcement Squad (SLES) which undertook intensive enforcement from 10th to 19th October, 09 conducted raids on different areas and during one such raid, the SLES members were attacked by illegal operators.
- Orissa Government has noticed that mafias are operating across the State borders of Orissa and Jharkhand states and in order to check illegal mining activities, matter has been taken up at senior level drawing attention to illegal inter-state mining operations and suggesting that a common platform should be set up so that team of officers from both the States can plan and work together.
- Between 10.11.2009 and 19.11.2009, the State Government has seized 4 vehicles, 19513 metric tonne of iron ore, 158 metric tonne of manganese ore valued at Rs.2.27 crore.

Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Government of India has written a letter on 26.11.09 to Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand, drawing his attention to the report of the State Government of Orissa which insisted upon joint inspection by the officers of both States.

Enquiry by Indian Bureau of Mines on mining scam

†1930. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Bureau of Mines has been entrusted with the work pertaining to studying and conducting a preliminary inquiry in recently unearthed mining scam in Orissa;

(b) if so, whether the Bureau has since given any initial findings;

(c) whether any further report is likely from the Bureau in this matter; and

(d) whether Government would made public the report given by the Bureau?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The Central Government received representations on illegal mining by M/s. Ram Bahadur Thakur Limited (RBTL) in Keonjhar district of Orissa. The Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) carried out preliminary inspection of the complaint between 30.8.2009 to 1.9.2009 and found evidence of illegal mining of 1957 tonnes of iron ore and 56453 tonnes of manganese ore amounting to approximately Rs.23.39 crore. The report of IBM has been sent to State Government for taking appropriate action against the guilty.

(d) IBM report is not a confidential report.

Allocation of reserves of Chiria mines

1931. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of estimated 2 billion tonnes of reserves in Chiria mines, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has been considered for allocation of 1 billion tonnes of iron ore reserves;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.